

August 13, 2018

WIC 1 OF 4 AGENCIES IN FLORIDA TO RECEIVE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

August National Breastfeeding Month and Black Breastfeeding Week is August 25-31



Contact: Kathy Newby; Kathy.Newby@flhealth.gov; 850-344-0580

Okaloosa County, Fla.— Women, Infants and Children (WIC), has been awarded the USDA, Gold Level Loving Support Award of Excellence. This is a national award, with 78 WIC agencies receiving the award this year, and only 4 in Florida: Okaloosa, Gadsden, Jackson and Pasco Counties.

"The Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa (DOH-Okaloosa), including WIC has made breastfeeding a priority in its Healthy Okaloosa and Florida Healthy Babies initiative and this recognition demonstrates the impact WIC has on improving the health of infants and mothers through breastfeeding," said Director Karen Chapman, DOH-Okaloosa. "This timely award also comes during National Breastfeeding Month!"

The USDA Loving Support Award of Excellence is awarded to WIC agencies that have provided exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities. The intent of the award is to provide models and motivate other local agencies and clinics to strengthen their breastfeeding promotion and support activities and ultimately increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among WIC participants. Three levels of excellence will be recognized and awarded: Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite.

For more information about this award, visit: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-priority-wic-program>. **DOH-Okaloosa holds breastfeeding classes in the WIC clinic in Fort Walton Beach and Crestview, for more information, contact WIC, 850-833-9254 or 689-7858.** For more information about the Florida WIC program, call 1-800-342-3556 or visit www.FloridaWIC.org. To learn more about breastfeeding initiatives in Florida, visit www.flbreastfeeding.org.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.

About The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) are agencies of USDA's Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services. FNS works to end hunger and obesity through the administration of 15 federal nutrition assistance programs including WIC, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and school meals. Working with our public, private and non-profit partners, our mission is to increase food security and reduce hunger by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet and nutrition education in a way that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence. No American should have to go hungry.